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Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/34, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its substantive session of 2009 a detailed report on progress made in the implementation of this resolution and updated information on the implementation of paragraph 4 of Council resolution 2006/36. The report also provides, further to resolution 2006/9, an assessment of the impact of inputs of the Commission on the Status of Women on discussions within the United Nations system.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in response to resolution 2008/34 of the Economic and Social Council. It provides details on progress made in implementing resolution 2008/34 and an update on the implementation of paragraph 4 of Council resolution 2006/36. In response to paragraph 19 of Council resolution 2006/9, the present report also includes an assessment of the impact of the inputs of the Commission on the Status of Women on discussions within the United Nations system.

2. The report draws on the responses of 38 United Nations entities[1] to a questionnaire approved by the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality at its eighth session, held from 24 to 26 February 2009.

3. The present report is divided into five sections as follows: section I, introduction; section II, progress in the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/34; section III, update of implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/36; section IV, impact of inputs of the Commission on the Status of Women on the work of the United Nations system; and section V, conclusions and recommendations.

II. Progress in the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/34

4. The Council, through its resolution 2008/34, reaffirmed the globally recognized role of gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality and in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The Council noted, inter alia, that a wide gap remained between policy and practice with respect to gender mainstreaming and, in paragraph 4 of resolution 2008/34, called upon the United

[1] Department of Political Affairs, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, including the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for Advancement of Women, Department of Public Information, Office of Internal Oversight Services, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Management, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Department of Safety and Security, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Economic Commission for Europe, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children's Fund, World Food Programme, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, International Labour Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, International Telecommunication Union, World Intellectual Property Organization, United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, United Nations Volunteers, United Nations Forum on Forests, World Trade Organization, United Nations Development Fund for Women, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Maritime Organization, Office of Legal Affairs and World Health Organization.

Nations system to take action in various areas. Those areas are discussed in the present section.

A. Strengthening accountability systems and mechanisms

5. In subparagraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph 4 of resolution 2008/34, the Council called for strengthened institutional accountability mechanisms, including through a more effective monitoring and evaluation framework for gender mainstreaming, based on common United Nations evaluation standards. It requested that accountability systems be strengthened for both management and staff through, inter alia, the inclusion of objectives and results related to gender mainstreaming in personnel workplans and appraisals.

6. In order to strengthen accountability systems, a number of entities have incorporated gender perspectives into the workplans of both management and staff, which are subject to evaluation through the appraisal system. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) reported on their involvement in an ongoing overview of institutional practices regarding management response to evaluation, with a view to identifying lessons learned and good practices.

7. The International Labour Organization (ILO), for example, reported that staff workplans were linked to its Action Plan on Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming, and were produced in a participatory manner in capacity-building workshops organized for gender focal points and programming staff. The World Health Organization (WHO) has integrated a gender classification into its enterprise resource planning system whereby staff are asked to indicate whether specific activities in the workplan are gender responsive. Some WHO clusters, such as Family and Community Health, have asked all senior managers to include gender in their performance appraisals.

8. At the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a new staff performance appraisal system includes indicators to promote gender equality within staff members' areas of responsibility and actions to promote understanding and address individuals' commitment to gender equality. In the Department of Safety and Security, managers are required to include gender-related objectives in their workplans to allow monitoring and recognition of achievements. The revision of the results and competency assessment system of UNDP introduced some major changes to performance management which aim to reinforce the results-based, strategic direction of UNDP. The 2009 results and competency assessment includes gender equality as one of the five mandatory key results for managers.

9. At the regional and country levels, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is using gender reviews to provide a basis for accountability. Some regions are developing innovative governance and accountability approaches which draw on a combined system of focal points, monitoring by regional and country-level management teams and an annual performance evaluation review. All regional directors report their progress in this area to the Executive Director through a global task force. The regional bureaux of UNDP have established gender steering committees at the regional level as an oversight mechanism to advance gender equality and the advancement of women. Furthermore, the UNDP Regional Bureau

for Asia and Pacific has established a Regional Gender Advisory Panel comprising gender experts from the region, representatives of Governments and civil society to inform its Gender Steering Committee and the regional programme.

10. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations reports that a gender checklist was developed in 2008 for senior managers in peacekeeping missions as a first step to the development of an accountability framework. The checklist has been disseminated to all senior managers in peacekeeping missions with the request that they provide biannual progress reports. Both the Department of Peacekeeping Operations action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the gender checklist have specific benchmarks and indicators of achievement against which progress is being measured. The action plan also includes clear gender equality results. For example, in the section of the action plan relating to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, an increase in the representation of women in mission leadership is specifically recommended.

11. A persistent area of weakness with regard to accountability is the slow development of a common tool for assessing progress and gaps. This makes it difficult to compare and evaluate progress throughout the system. Furthermore, although the Secretariat had instituted a criterion of "respect for diversity/gender" as part of the performance indicators for all staff, this was not applied systematically or consistently in all cases.

B. Gender balance

12. Concerned that a wide gap remains between policy and practice and convinced that gender balance is a key lever in the promotion of gender mainstreaming, the Council requested entities to ensure gender balance at headquarters and at the country level.

13. In order to promote gender balance, a new ILO action plan for gender equality 2008-2009 seeks to ensure greater parity between women and men in promotions to senior posts, in management and in leadership training programmes. It also seeks to strengthen and enforce provisions for a gender-sensitive and family-friendly workplace. The UNDP gender equality strategy 2008-2011 recommends special measures, including affirmative action, to attain and sustain the 50:50 parity goal. It further recommends more efficient inter-agency mobility, particularly for women in senior management positions, and emphasizes the need for more rigorous implementation of work/life policies and flexible working arrangements to create an enabling work environment and stronger accountability. The UNDP strategy reaffirms the Programme's commitment to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment as not only one of its operational principles for enhancing development effectiveness, but also a development goal to be pursued in its own right. The United Nations Volunteers has reached gender parity, including at the senior management level. Work/life balance policies and flexible working arrangements have been endorsed and promoted by management and are now widely accessible by staff.

14. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) gender action plan identifies a range of measures to achieve 50 per cent representation of women at senior management levels by 2015. The action plan

focuses on three areas — recruitment, training and mentoring, and work/life balance — with the objective of ensuring gender balance among those in senior management positions. UNHCR, through its Special Constraints Panel, is working to alleviate personal difficulties experienced by staff at the time of scheduled rotations. Appeals can be addressed to the Panel, which considers staff members' circumstances and provides recommendations that are submitted to the Director of Human Resources for endorsement.

15. A number of factors impede progress in attaining gender balance. Entities reported that among them were inadequate accountability, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. The lack of gender balance entities weakens the ability of the United Nations to mainstream gender since there is little or no basis on which managers can work to change the status quo.

C. Financial and human resources

16. Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/34 requested the United Nations system to ensure that programmes, plans and budgets visibly mainstream gender perspectives and allocate adequate financial and human resources for gender mainstreaming commensurate with the organizational gender equality goals. However, most entities still do not have sufficient financial and human resources to meet those goals. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), for example, is experiencing major budgetary constraints in its gender mainstreaming efforts, which have had negative effects on progress. The Department of Security and Safety needs additional resources to increase its ability to identify, appoint and retain female security officers. In addition, existing resources are not adequate to fully address the security and safety needs of female staff serving in the field.

17. Lack of funding has been a serious obstacle to the ability of the International Research and Training Institute (INSTRAW) to fulfil its mandate and collaborate with other entities of the United Nations system in gender mainstreaming and capacity-building. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) notes that although it has prioritized gender equality and allocated resources accordingly, the inadequacy of funding for gender equality work on a global and system-wide level affects the work of the Fund.

18. UNDP noted the critical importance of additional resources in support of regional and country-level work on gender equality. A contribution of $2.5 million to the gender thematic trust fund from the Government of Spain financed 23 country-level projects throughout 2007 and 2008. The fund focuses on delivery of gender-sensitive poverty reduction strategies, gender-sensitive indicators and statistics to track progress towards gender equality, legal and institutional capacity-building, and vulnerability and opportunity assessment as a tool to measure the feminization of poverty. It has catalysed an enormous amount of interest and demand among UNDP offices, United Nations entities and other stakeholders. As a result, recent demands for funds amounting to $26 million have greatly exceeded the contribution of the Government of Spain. WHO regional and country offices face human resources shortages, with country offices often experiencing high turnover rates of gender focal points. With overall institutional budget cuts, work on gender across the Organization is currently receiving less financing than in the 2006-2007 biennium

despite increased interest and support for collaborative activities across WHO and in countries.

19. It is evident that the effective integration of gender perspectives across all areas of the United Nations work as well as in its institutional culture must be supported by increased levels of human and financial resources.

D. Gender specialists and gender focal points

20. A corps of well-trained gender specialists and focal points has the potential to significantly strengthen the efforts of United Nations entities to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. While entities continue to rely on gender specialists and focal points to promote gender mainstreaming, few of them provide adequate training or resource materials to enhance the performance of focal points. However, a few entities have led the way in this area. In 2008, UNDP provided gender mainstreaming training at its Bratislava Regional Centre for gender focal points from the region. The training equipped the gender focal points and other UNDP project staff who were identified as potential gender change agents with the basic concepts, tools and skills necessary to design and facilitate gender mainstreaming at the country level. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in conjunction with the International Training Centre of ILO, organized a training-of-trainers programme for gender focal points with the aim of building capacity for gender mainstreaming training and ensuring sustainability at the country level. ILO has recently started to offer workshops on the "how to" of gender mainstreaming to staff at Headquarters and in the field. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is taking the first steps towards developing a gender mainstreaming training programme, beginning with training for gender focal points in the field.

21. Slow progress is being made with respect to promoting the collaboration and coordination of gender specialists and focal points in areas of peace and security, humanitarian affairs and economic and social development. Approximately 20 United Nations Volunteers gender specialists, out of a total of 47, are serving in peacebuilding/peacekeeping operations.

22. Despite this, the number of gender specialists and focal points at the headquarters, regional and country levels remains low. This means that the critical mass required to effect change in a catalytic manner has yet to be achieved.

E. Progress with data collection and their use in measuring results

23. Subparagraphs (i), (j) and (p) of paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/34 address the need to promote data collection, a common understanding of a results-based management framework, with benchmarks and indicators for measuring progress and the inclusion of gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators in entities' strategic frameworks. Improving the ability of the United Nations system to measure progress in addressing gender mainstreaming is critical as it would also enhance accountability.

24. Most entities reported the use of results-based management frameworks to improve gender mainstreaming and narrow the gap between policy and practice.

Entities increasingly set concrete targets and indicators to be systematically monitored at the country level. In line with its results-based management system, UNDP has integrated gender equality in monitoring and evaluation tools and processes. In addition, the UNDP "balanced scorecard" will be enhanced by integrating the gender mainstreaming scorecard that was developed and tested in 2007-2008. The WHO programme budgets for 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 bienniums include relevant indicators on the incorporation of gender analysis in its normative work. Future progress will be measured against the indicators.

25. Using a results-based management framework, UNHCR is streamlining its standards and indicators to increase gender sensitivity and provide a better picture of the well-being of girls, boys, women and men in the context of its work. It is also establishing and promoting the systematic use of a set of agreed standards and indicators for planning and measuring the impact of its operations.

26. Several entities have developed means of impact assessment, including indicators to systematically monitor and evaluate training and the performance of trainers. Although the Department of Management has traditionally based evaluations only on data gathered from participants at the end of a programme or workshop, it plans to expand the data to include a follow-up questionnaire, surveys and focus groups, among others, for certain targeted programmes in 2009/10.

27. UNESCO encourages management and staff to integrate a gender perspective in the workplans they develop for each biennium. As a result, the organization has been able to monitor the impact and effectiveness of training as workplans are reviewed and new ones developed. In UNDP, targets and indicators on capacity-building for gender mainstreaming are part of the gender equality strategy. ILO also includes various indicators on training in its Action Plan.

28. UNHCR has developed indicators to assess the impact of gender training into its age, gender and diversity mainstreaming accountability framework. The main indicators seek to ensure, inter alia, that all staff in UNHCR country operations base their protection, programme planning, design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up actions on participatory assessment with women, men, girls and boys using a rights- and community-based approach.

29. At UNICEF, key results indicators in the organization's medium-term strategic plan have been revised and strengthened from a gender perspective, allowing for better tracking of progress in the promotion of gender equality. Sex-disaggregated data are required to be used for reporting on results in country programme documents.

30. As entities make progress in establishing indicators to monitor progress, many are also increasing their use of sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators in materials disseminated to policymakers and the general public. In this regard, the collection of sex-disaggregated data is on the rise.

31. Various entities produce and analyse sex-disaggregated data, which support system efforts at gender mainstreaming. Within the Secretariat, the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has primary responsibility for data collection, and it continues to generate more sex-disaggregated data, especially to facilitate the measurement of progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs continues to provide analysis of sex-disaggregated

population data, which are widely used by the United Nations system, policymakers and the general public and have facilitated gender mainstreaming in the analytical work of United Nations entities. The official United Nations demographic estimates and projections prepared for all countries and areas of the world are sex-disaggregated, as are the data collection and analysis of international migrant stocks, rural and urban populations, marital status and mortality patterns of the population, including the demographic impact of AIDS. Other priority areas for analysis are fertility levels and trends and their determinants, including the use of contraceptives.

32. UNFPA plays a leading operational role in developing national capacities to collect, analyse, disseminate and utilize sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics at both the central and decentralized levels. It supports censuses and surveys, including the demographic and health surveys which focus on various priority gender issues. UNFPA also provides ongoing support for integrated management information systems to facilitate the storage, computation and presentation of data from various sources. UNICEF collects sex-disaggregated data in its multiple-indicator cluster survey and other data collection activities that it supports. INSTRAW prioritizes the collection and promotion of sex-disaggregated data to highlight the differences between status and roles of women and men, with a view to supporting the formulation of gender-sensitive public policy, programmes and projects. At the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), all fields and departments will be required to collect and code sex-disaggregated data in the next biennium (2010-2011), and all the indicators will be compared with an existing baseline of such data. This will give UNRWA a clearer idea of gender gaps in its service delivery so that it can take the necessary corrective measures.

33. With regard to monitoring gender mainstreaming in training and staff development, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) has developed templates to collect information from participants in training and recipients of fellowships. It also collects and analyses sex-disaggregated data on the selection of OIOS staff.

F. Unifying evaluation methodologies

34. In its resolution 2008/34, the Council highlighted the need to assess gaps in gender mainstreaming and to unify evaluation methodologies. Although individual entities are making progress in developing and implementing their evaluation strategies, limited progress has been made in reaching a unified methodology. However, several entities reported on their participation in working groups of the United Nations Evaluation Group, which is preparing an overview of institutional practices regarding management response to evaluation in order to identify lessons learned by organizations and to identify good practices. The main purpose of the overview is to standardize approaches towards the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in evaluations.

35. Many entities cited their participation in the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and other inter-agency processes, as well as surveys and questionnaires, as useful opportunities to assess progress in gender mainstreaming. In order to strengthen the capacity of other entities, INSTRAW offers assessment,

monitoring and evaluation services through the review of annual and other reports, focus group discussions and personal interviews to obtain a broad picture of gender mainstreaming efforts and their strengths and weaknesses.

36. In order to enable staff to identify gaps in gender mainstreaming, ILO uses participatory gender audits for organizational learning at the institutional as well as individual levels. Its gender audit methodology is being used as an assessment tool for United Nations country teams. In contrast to the ILO work unit approach, the Economic Commission for Europe bases its assessments on the work of the gender focal point, who is in regular contact with substantive divisions.

37. Using the results of gender capacity assessments at the global and country levels, UNFPA will establish indicators for evaluating and monitoring progress in gender mainstreaming. Those assessments will help to enhance programme effectiveness and resource allocation for gender equality and women's empowerment. In 2008, a pilot global needs assessment was undertaken by UNHCR using a rigorous methodology drawn from its Strengthening Protection Capacity Project, which seeks to facilitate national responses to protection problems through a process of assessment, dialogue and joint planning in States hosting refugees. The assessment showed that 30 per cent of the needs of UNHCR refugees were unmet. The results were made available to interested United Nations entities and can serve to develop joint actions. The global needs assessment is being rolled out worldwide in 2010-2011.

38. The efforts of individual entities suggest a wide variety of approaches, without an emerging unified approach to the development of methodologies. This is a constraint to the ability of the United Nations system to make measurable progress in closing the gaps in gender mainstreaming.

G. Dissemination of good practices, tools and methodologies

39. United Nations entities continue to use varied approaches, including electronic and print media, to disseminate best practices on gender mainstreaming. Most entities reported the value of regular meetings on gender mainstreaming, in particular through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and its task forces, for that purpose. Some entities share good practices, tools and methodologies with United Nations country teams through gender audits (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), or through programme evaluations (the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)).

40. A number of entities provide such information on their websites. UNESCO videotapes and documents, the good practices, standards and methods of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the INSTRAW gender mainstreaming resource guide are all available on their websites. INSTRAW seeks to turn its resource guide into an interactive community of practice on gender mainstreaming in order to bring together gender mainstreaming practitioners for knowledge-sharing. The United Nations Volunteers participates in the UNDP GenderNet and the knowledge platform for United Nations Volunteers Country Offices Team and headquarters staff.

41. Other electronic initiatives include those of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNIFEM, all of which have worked collaboratively to develop an inter-agency

e-learning course on gender. The course is the first of its kind and is meant to serve all four agencies. The main objectives of the course are to build staff capacity on gender equality programming through an interactive, self-paced online course, create a common understanding of gender equality, women's rights and gender mainstreaming on both the conceptual and practical levels, stimulate knowledge-sharing and management on gender issues and synthesize tools and knowledge on gender equality and capacity development.

42. ESCWA has also developed e-learning training modules, which are available to all staff on the Intranet. Other entities, such as the World Trade Organization, have not created their own electronic networks on gender mainstreaming, but are contributing to existing networks.

H. Collaboration at the country level

43. Several entities have established ways to strengthen collaboration with United Nations country teams and other national stakeholders in gender mainstreaming efforts. Collaboration within and among the country teams continues to be strengthened, including through joint action with national partners and increased joint programming, monitoring and evaluation and pooling of resources.

44. UNDP has gender focal points in most of its country offices. Gender focal teams are being introduced so that there is a gender focal point appointed across all programme areas. Gender thematic groups, which bring together gender focal points from all the United Nations entities, also provide an opportunity to address gender equality issues across entities.

45. In the context of the new regionalized structure of UNFPA, gender mainstreaming capacity development activities are promoted through a technical assistance delivery model that focuses on collaborating with regional institutions, including those with mandates to advance gender equality and promote women's empowerment. The Fund will promote and monitor capacity development in the field of gender mainstreaming more effectively through its newly established regional and subregional offices. In accordance with its age, gender and diversity mainstreaming strategy to protect and empower disenfranchised groups, UNHCR supports the meaningful participation of women, girls, boys and men of all ages and backgrounds, using a rights- and community-based approach, in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its policies, programmes, operations and activities.

46. As part of an inter-agency strategy, UNAIDS will help to develop regional capacities in support of national responses to HIV/AIDS. This will in the first instance be through direct financial support to selected institutions and knowledge hubs. Joint UNAIDS teams are responsible for the capacity enhancement of both civil society and Governments, as well as the United Nations system itself.

47. In order to promote democratic governance, UNDP has placed particular emphasis on working with partners to support women's political participation, including with political parties, to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. United Nations Volunteers gender specialists support national authorities in achieving women's empowerment goals. For example, the number of

Volunteers assigned as gender specialists in the context of peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations has steadily increased from 3 in 2004 to 20.

48. UNFPA has established partnerships with parliamentarians in many countries to provide political and legislative support for the empowerment of women. Along with other United Nations partners, it has supported the Regional Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians to strengthen capacity development resource mobilization, advocacy and leadership skills.

49. INSTRAW has worked with a number of countries on the formulation of national action plans for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The Institute supported the formulation of a national action plan for Liberia, which was launched in March 2009.

50. The Gender, Women and Health Network of WHO supports gender mainstreaming activities in countries on the basis of country demand, ranging from requests for capacity-building, such as in Tajikistan, to policy revision and assessment, such as in Yemen, to health sector reviews, such as in Kenya.

51. Several entities report that collaboration with external partners, including donors and civil society, is undertaken mainly at the country level in the process of technical assistance project design and implementation. FAO, for example, collaborates with external partners in order to strengthen the impact of its work and reports that collaboration takes the form of policy support/advice, technical assistance/support/advice and capacity development to integrate gender concerns in development strategies.

52. Limited resources and prevailing conditions continue to constrain gender mainstreaming efforts at the country level. UNRWA is facing a growing number of refugees and shortage of funds for its core programmes. Gender-specific initiatives compete with the need to provide basic health care and education for Palestinian refugees. ESCWA also reported that conflict and war make the implementation of activities difficult or, in some cases, impossible.

53. UNICEF and UNIFEM are working towards more coherent and holistic action by United Nations country teams to mainstream gender and to promote gender equality at the national level. The initiative is being piloted in Albania, Morocco and Nepal over a two-year period. The country teams will work to identify lessons learned from this experience.

I. Inter-agency collaboration

54. The United Nations system continued to strengthen inter-agency collaboration, including through the work of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, which reports to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its high-level committees for programme and management. The Network provides a forum for the exchange of information and collaboration on gender mainstreaming, capacity-building and the development of methodologies and tools. The Network's task forces seek to advance gender mainstreaming in a number of areas and play a catalytic role in drawing attention to gender perspectives in intergovernmental processes. The biennial workshops, organized by the Network in collaboration with the Development Assistance Committee on Gender Equality Network of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, continue

to provide opportunities for examining emerging issues and sharpening the approach to gender mainstreaming.

55. The campaign to end violence against women and girls, which was launched by the Secretary-General, has provided further opportunities for inter-agency collaboration. UNIFEM, in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, organized a consultation with civil society organizations to discuss how to enhance partnerships to promote the goals of the campaign. The campaign and its framework provide an opportunity for all parts of the United Nations system to review their work with a view to identifying opportunities to incorporate activities and strategies for addressing violence against women and girls.

III. Update on actions taken to implement paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/36

56. Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/36 recognized the importance of training as critical for increasing the awareness, knowledge, commitment and capacity of staff in respect of mainstreaming a gender perspective into United Nations policies and programmes. In the resolution, the Council made various recommendations for enhancing capacity, especially through training. Progress in those areas has been reviewed in previous reports from the Secretary-General to the Council.

57. While entities continue their efforts to enhance capacity-building within the United Nations system, a key conclusion reached by the Secretary-General, which was included in his report to the Council on gender mainstreaming at its substantive session of 2008 (see E/2008/53), still remains, namely, that while promising initiatives continue to be undertaken by entities within the United Nations system, progress remains uneven. A systematic, effective capacity development programme on gender equality has yet to be established. However, note has been taken of the efforts that are under way, through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, to achieve that end.

58. The commitment to gender mainstreaming training has clearly evolved, including the development or revision of specific strategies or action plans and the integration of gender mainstreaming training in core competence development programmes. For example, while gender mainstreaming has already been incorporated into the UNICEF core programme process training, additional training activities will take place at the regional and global levels in 2009 as part of a one-year action plan to follow up on an evaluation that was undertaken in 2007. The one-year plan will be followed by a multi-year plan, which will include a capacity-building component. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) plans to develop a comprehensive training policy which will require that a gender perspective be integrated into all staff and management training programmes by the end of 2009. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) executive leadership programme and management courses now include a gender perspective. The UNDP gender equality strategy 2008-2011 includes the development of a high-level learning programme that seeks to enhance internal capacities and ensure that UNDP delivers on commitments to gender equality. Monitoring and evaluation of the gender equality strategy within the UNDP system will be undertaken in 2010 in

collaboration with the Evaluation Office, which is an independent unit reporting to the Executive Board through the Administrator.

59. Progress is being made towards making gender mainstreaming training mandatory for all staff and towards developing specific training for different categories and levels of staff. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has reported that there has been extensive integration of gender perspectives into capacity-building activities. Its Department-wide action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) sets out activities to ensure that a gender dimension is reflected in the work of each office. Implementation of the action plan is monitored by a gender task force, which comprises representatives from all offices in the Department. In addition, a full-time gender mainstreaming trainer works with the Department's Integrated Training Service to ensure that a gender perspective is incorporated into all training materials. All new staff, both at Headquarters and in the field, receive induction training from the Department, which includes a session on gender issues that are relevant to peacekeeping. At WFP, a new policy makes gender mainstreaming mandatory in all operations, and training will also be mandatory for all staff. Recognizing the importance of gender mainstreaming training for its almost 8,000 Volunteers, the United Nations Volunteers has included gender mainstreaming sessions in the induction training for its Programme Officers at its headquarters, which is in addition to any gender mainstreaming training which the Volunteers might receive in their hosting United Nations agency.

60. Gender mainstreaming training for managers to build up their capacity to lead work related to gender equality work is crucial. While a few entities reported that they had no specific training for managers, others reported that they are making progress in that area. Some are ensuring that managers participate in training that is offered to all staff; others have created specific training for managers. The UNESCO capacity development and training programme for gender mainstreaming is mandatory for all staff from the P-1 to D-2 levels. Following the launch of its gender equality strategy in 2008, UNDP reports that training for resident coordinators, resident representatives, deputy resident representatives and other managers has been implemented. Furthermore, its capacity development plan will include the revision of the resident representative/resident coordinator induction course and the development of specialized training/orientation on management for gender equality for middle and senior management.

61. WHO has been progressively developing and rolling out a capacity-building strategy for its staff and country partners on gender mainstreaming in health planning and programming. It has been building local, sustainable capacity through training-of-trainer activities in which local participants are coached by gender and health specialists on the implementation of the gender mainstreaming tools of WHO.

62. The Learning and Training Services of the United Nations System Staff College is developing a system-wide capacity development programme on gender issues. Significant investments have been made in the development of training materials, and the importance of learning from the experiences of specific entities has been noted.

63. Electronic knowledge networks are an essential part of capacity-building for gender mainstreaming and its follow-up. Mindful of the significant level of resources required for the development and maintenance of electronic knowledge

networks, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality has in recent years focused on linking and expanding the existing networks and databases. Some entities report progress in the creation of new or expansion of existing electronic knowledge networks. The inter-agency website WomenWatch is launching a new "really simple syndication" gender equality newsfeed, which will collate and report news on gender issues across all entities. UNESCO shares its seminars, organized in the framework of the UNESCO Forum on Gender Equality, through the videotapes and documents available on its website. ESCAP reports that its Community of Practice on social inclusion, gender equality and health, initiated under the development account project, serves as a forum for regional and interregional dialogue on good practices with regard to mainstreaming gender into policies in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. UNHCR has designed a multimedia blog to explore values and policies related to age, gender and diversity mainstreaming.

64. One of the areas in which action is required to enhance gender mainstreaming is the clear identification of whom, and which office, should assume primary responsibility for gender mainstreaming training. Human resources offices are well placed to influence the inclusion of gender mainstreaming training as a core aspect of staff development. However, they often play only a supporting role, or no role at all. Examples of good practices, however, include WFP, where the gender unit previously had the primary responsibility for capacity development for gender mainstreaming. However, this responsibility will now shift to human resources, as development capacity in gender mainstreaming is now seen as a corporate priority. The gender unit will maintain a secondary role. At ILO, the Human Resources Development Department has primary responsibility for enabling institutional mechanisms for gender equality in the organization, including for staffing and training in gender mainstreaming. At UNHCR, the Staff Development Section in the Division of Human Resources Management is responsible for the mainstreaming of gender issues into management and leadership programmes and for ensuring that gender issues are part of training programmes. Gender issues have been mainstreamed into the UNHCR Management Learning Programme. The Office of Human Resources Management, via its Learning, Development and Human Resources Services Division, provides training to all Departments and offices away from Headquarters.

IV. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9

65. In paragraph 19 of its resolution 2006/9, the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on the impact of the inputs of the Commission on the Status of Women on discussions within the United Nations system. The primary avenues through which the Commission's work influences discussion within the United Nations system are the agreed conclusions on the priority theme of the session.

66. The priority theme entitled "Financing for gender equality and empowerment of women" and the review theme, entitled "Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution in post-conflict peacebuilding", for

the fifty-second session of the Commission (2008) continue to remain relevant and to shape discussion and action within the United Nations.

67. The Commission's themes stimulated much discussion across entities. ILO held an International Women's Day panel at headquarters in March 2008 on the theme "Investing in decent work for women: not just right, but smart" and published an information brief entitled "Small change, big changes: women and microfinance".

68. Various reports are also focusing on the priority theme of the Commission on the Status of Women. The fourth session of the ESCWA Committee on Women will focus on the theme "Economic participation of women".

69. UNDP, in collaboration with the American University and KwaZulu Natal University, the International Development Research Centre and the Ford Foundation, carried out a research project in eight countries (Argentina, Ghana, India, Mexico, Morocco, South Africa, Uganda and the United Kingdom) on globalization, gender and taxation: improving revenue generation and social protection in developing countries. The project aimed to advance the understanding of the impact of tax policies and tax reforms on gender equality in countries at various levels of development. The United Nations Volunteers, in coordination with several other United Nations entities and through extensive consultations, has initiated research on gender and volunteerism as an initial step to develop a prescriptive content on gender and volunteerism.

70. There has also been impact on the discussions between the United Nations and civil society. UNIFEM worked throughout 2008 to provide access to information and support to gender equality advocates in the area of financing for development. Working closely with a coalition of women's groups, UNIFEM participated in civil society hearings, side events and General Assembly discussions of each of the chapters in the Monterrey Consensus. The Fund organized joint side events with UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA at the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, held in Doha from 29 November to 2 December 2008, and contributed to the inclusion of detailed references to gender equality and macroeconomic policy in the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development.

71. UNFPA strengthened its partnerships with organizations specializing in the area of microfinance. As a result of the partnership between UNFPA and the Microcredit Summit Campaign, a network was established to connect and support microcredit practitioners, advocates, educational institutions, donor agencies, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, and others involved with microcredit to promote good practices in the field.

72. The Women Leading for Livelihoods initiative of UNHCR, which aims at promoting the economic independence and empowerment of refugee and displaced women and girls around the world, expanded its support to projects in Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Kenya, Morocco and Serbia in 2008.

73. Those enduring impacts are the result of extensive preparations leading into the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women and a concerted effort by the Division for the Advancement of Women to disseminate information related to the themes. For example, several conferences, workshops and media outreach events took place in 2008. The Division for the Advancement of Women

prepared a brochure containing the 2008 agreed conclusions of "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women" in order to bring attention to gender perspectives in preparation for the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development. The Division for the Advancement of Women and the Financing for Development Office of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs hosted a workshop on Inequality, Development and Growth, co-organized with the International Association for Feminist Economics, in May 2008 at Headquarters in New York. The Department of Public Information produced a media advisory and two backgrounders, one on "Investing in women and girls" and the other on "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women".

74. Discussions on the 2008 review theme "Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding" also spurred or strengthened a number of activities in entities, especially through reinforcement of work related to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

75. In 2008, the Department of Political Affairs included gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting issue in discussions with the African Union Commission on conflict prevention, mediation and electoral processes. Within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, gender units in peacekeeping missions have been advocating for women's participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding in line with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Despite those efforts, more needs to be done by other entities to enhance the role of women in those areas.

76. ILO has drafted guidelines on the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants (with chapters on women and girls as well as on young men) and developed a joint ILO/UNHCR technical cooperation partnership in Liberia on a job opportunities survey and capacity-building of the local cooperative development authority and the Liberia Opportunities Industrialization Centres (with a component on women).

77. ESCAP is planning to give attention to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and some of the recent review themes of the Commission on the Status of Women in its high-level intergovernmental meeting to review implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action, scheduled for October 2009. ESCWA is preparing a flagship publication on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the ESCWA region and the participation of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The study will include case studies from conflict-stricken areas such as Lebanon, Iraq and Palestine, and another study will analyse the conditions that promote or delay the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the regions covered by ESCWA.

78. UNIFEM facilitated the involvement of women's groups to develop common agendas to influence peace processes in Burundi, the Darfur region, Guatemala, Rwanda, the Sudan and Uganda and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. UNIFEM has also supported gender responsive peace processes in Burundi, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda. In 2009, UNFPA will continue to provide guidance, technical assistance and coordination support at the country level with regard to resolution 1325 (2000), including by undertaking a needs assessment exercise in select UNFPA country offices to ascertain current work undertaken, which will also guide future programming; develop indicators to measure work and impact on this issue; and

participate in meetings of the Inter-agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security, while undertaking activities as delineated by the Task Force.

79. In 2008, INSTRAW launched the gender and security sector reform toolkit, which is an initial response to the need for more information and advice on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of security sector reform processes from a gender perspective. The toolkit is designed to provide policymakers and practitioners with a general introduction to why gender issues are important in security sector reform, as well as practical tips on how to incorporate gender issues in security sector reform policies and processes and increase women's participation as key actors in the security sector.

80. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs actively promoted the participation of women's organizations (around 300 non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations) in the peacebuilding portal (www.peacebuildingportal.org), an interactive online database for organizations working in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

81. While it is too early to evaluate the impact of the priority theme of the fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women, "Equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS", advocacy to ensure the equal sharing of responsibilities, including in the context of the current financial crisis, has been strengthened. Thus, ILO warns that the current global financial crisis could exacerbate the double burden of women holding jobs in the labour market while taking care of chores and relatives at home. Helping women to achieve a better balance between work and family life must be part of national policies to achieve decent and productive work for both sexes.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

82. United Nations entities continue to make progress towards gender mainstreaming. A gender scorecard is being developed through extensive consultation between the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Department of Management and the Office of Human Resources Management. The scorecard will include information on the use of flexible working arrangements, functioning of the gender focal point system, use of the roster in staff selection and other measures, and will be part of twice yearly reporting to the management committee. In addition, the Office of Human Resources Management is working with the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to develop revised gender balance targets for the 2009-2010 human resources action plans. Implementation is monitored through these human resources action plans as well as the Secretary-General's compacts with heads of departments and offices. Many entities have included accountability for gender mainstreaming in overall institutional accountability frameworks, monitoring, evaluation and oversight mechanisms, and staff performance appraisals. Progress has been made to enhance the capacities and resources of gender specialists at both the headquarters and country levels.

83. An increasing number of entities have made specific commitments to gender mainstreaming training, including in core competence development to ensure that all gender equality policies, strategies and action plans include such commitments.

Mandatory training has been introduced in some entities, and training for different categories of staff, including management levels, has also been established.

84. Entities have continued to use results-based management frameworks with targets and indicators as a means to improve implementation and monitoring of progress in gender mainstreaming. The use of sex-disaggregated data continues to increase.

85. Some progress is being made with regard to assessing gaps in gender mainstreaming and unifying evaluation methodologies. For example, the United Nations Evaluation Group is conducting a study to prepare an overview of institutional practices regarding management response to evaluation and to identify lessons drawn by organizations from their experiences. The main purpose is to standardize approaches on gender mainstreaming in evaluations. Yet progress towards harmonizing approaches to gender mainstreaming and evaluation of progress has been slow. Most entities continue to use entity-specific tools to assess progress and gaps.

86. Inter-agency collaboration has increased and strengthened, especially through the work of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, which provides a forum for the exchange of information on gender mainstreaming, collaboration on capacity-building and the development of methodologies and tools and the United Nations Development Group.

87. The priority themes of the Commission on the Status of Women continue to influence discussion and action within and across entities.

88. The number of, and training and capacity-building for, gender specialists and gender focal points remains inadequate. Thus, the primary catalysts for the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming may not be adequately equipped for the tasks.

89. In general, there is a clear need to harmonize approaches to gender mainstreaming, including approaches to training, monitoring, and measurement and evaluation of progress. Harmonization holds the key to ensuring accountability within and across entities and is fundamental for system-wide coherence and a One United Nations approach.

90. Overall progress on gender mainstreaming has been uneven, however, and gaps and challenges remain. The underresourcing of gender equality activities remains a significant challenge. In most entities, gender mainstreaming has not been matched by sustained and predictable human and financial resources, which results in limitations in the delivery of systematic support for gender equality at the country level.

91. **To ensure that United Nations entities strive to enhance progress in gender mainstreaming to close the gap between policy and practice, and that they do so with unified tools and approaches, the Council may wish to recommend that entities take the following actions:**

(a) **Collaborate to establish specific accountability guidelines, tools and mechanisms for gender mainstreaming at the Headquarters, regional and country levels;**

(b) **Further strengthen monitoring, reporting and evaluation of progress and identification of gaps, using common methods and indicators developed collaboratively, to allow assessment of progress across the system;**

(c) **Substantially increase the use of electronic means to provide capacity development for managers and staff, including mandatory staff training in all entities;**

(d) **Ensure that the provision of gender mainstreaming training is tailored to the needs of specific sectors and different categories of staff;**

(e) **Further strengthen the role of gender specialists and focal points by ensuring that all field offices and Headquarters have gender focal points and specialists and by creating enabling environments that provide clear mandates, increased capacity development and resources to support them;**

(f) **Ensure operationalization of the system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming and strengthening knowledge management and exchange, including through the use of electronic networks and databases, as applicable;**

(g) **Use existing training institutions, especially the United Nations System Staff College, to assist entities in developing and applying unified training modules on gender mainstreaming;**

(h) **Continue to use all avenues, including the Secretary-General's campaign to end violence against women, to strengthen inter-agency collaboration for gender mainstreaming and for developing a coherent and unified approach towards gender equality and women's empowerment;**

(i) **In the light of the continued relevance of the priority theme, "Financing for gender equality and empowerment of women", of the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and recognizing the gender dimensions of the current financial crisis, request entities to routinely address the impact of the crisis on gender equality and women's empowerment.**